REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are all the claims presently pending in the application. Claims 1-13 are allowed. Claims 14-20 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over US Patent 6,389,547 to James et al.

It is noted that Applicant specifically states that no amendment to any claim herein should be construed as a disclaimer of any interest in or right to an equivalent of any element or feature of the amended claim.

This rejection is respectfully traversed in the following discussion.

I. THE CLAIMED INVENTION

As described and defined, for example by claim 14, the present invention is directed to a network bus bridge node, including a plurality of portals and a role decision module that determines a timing role for each portal and sets each portal up in accordance with said determined role.

Conventional systems fail to incorporate such role decision process.

An advantage of the present invention is that network synchronization is established without using a separate control signal for establishing bus synchronism even if conventional IEEE 1394 components are connected to the network.

II. THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

The Examiner alleges that James, renders as obvious the present invention as defined by claims 14-20. However, James merely represents, at most, the timing interconnection of a typical 1394 bus network.

In contrast, the present invention provides that this timing interconnection has been established by a timing role decision process in which each bridge determines the timing role for each portal and sets up the portal in its timing role. This decision process ensures which of the portal gets selected for the local clock master. James does not teach or suggest this approach and does not require such timing role decision process for its purpose.

Additionally, this technique allows network timing to occur without the need for a separate control signal. In one embodiment, a network administrator provides a manual input

to determine which node serves as the network clock reference node. In another embodiment, the system can negotiate which node serves as the network clock reference node, thereby allowing the system to automatically configure its timing.

The Examiner concedes that James does not disclose a role decision module but alleges that such "... function would have been performed by the disclosed synchronization method with the motivation of obtaining a method for synchronizing a bus bridge to a master clock under 1394 IEEE standards for synchronization of audio, video, and audio/video interconnect systems."

However, Applicant submits that the patentability analysis must be done through the eyes of a person of ordinary skill in the art. Applicant further submits that a person of ordinary skill in the art would consider that James teaches a method for synchronizing a bus bridge to a master clock.

Applicant submits that, to one of ordinary skill in the art, the concept of synchronization is entirely different from the concept of deciding which timing role to assume.

That is, James addresses an entirely different problem from that of the present invention. Applicant further submits that, absent at least a suggestion of the different problem of determining the role for timing, one of ordinary skill in the art would not, in any reasonable, objective way, be motivated to adopt the methods of the present invention for "... synchronizing a bus bridge to a master clock...", when James already has a process dedicated to the synchronization and that process does not in any way require a determination of timing roles for the bridge components.

Hence, turning to the clear language of the claims, there is no teaching or suggestion in James for: "... a role decision module that determines a timing role for each said portal and sets each said portal up in accordance with said determined role", as required by claim 14.

For the reasons stated above, the claimed invention is fully patentable over the cited references.

Further, the other prior art of record has been reviewed, but it too, even in combination with James, fails to teach or suggest the claimed invention.

III. FORMAL MATTERS AND CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1-20, all the claims presently

pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date: 8/2/04

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CERTIFICATION OF TRANSMISSION

I certify that I transmitted via facsimile to (703) 872-9306 this Request for Reconsideration under 37 CFR §1.116 to Examiner R. Pizarro on August 2, 2004.

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